



FAIR TAX REFORM FOR FAMILIES & SMALL BUSINESSES:

This year the state is looking at a likely \$2.2 billion revenue shortfall. What that funding gap means for working families is frightening.

If we continue down this path, vital services such as schools, health care for seniors and a Medicaid buy-in program for folks with new jobs, and many other programs will likely face cuts. Budget shortfalls have become a chronic problem that has forced cuts in funding for roads, schools and health care in the past, and will continue to force even more cuts in the future unless we fix the problem now.



To make matters worse, the State Supreme Court recently eliminated Washington’s estate tax. **The estate tax affected only the richest 1 percent of the taxpayers**, estates of \$950,000 or more this last year. The state not only loses this revenue into the future (unless Legislators re-adopt the estate tax) but the Supreme Court is forcing the state to repay close to \$250 million in taxes already collected. By losing this tax on the richest estates, even more financial burdens fall on working families.

The federal tax cuts for the rich, giveaways to corporations, the Iraq war, and record federal budget and trade deficits have pushed a huge tax burden onto regular working families to pick up the slack.

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Here in Washington, the budget gap and estate tax deletion show a pressing need for thorough review of how our state raises money to pay for key services. I co-sponsored a bill to examine tax exemptions, and I’ve been taking part in a series of meetings to look at how we can fix our broken system. **In a nutshell, we need to clean up our revenue system so people who work hard aren’t the hardest hit by taxes.**

I need to hear your thoughts on possible solutions to this chronic problem.



State Representative

Bob Hasegawa

425 John L. O’Brien Building
PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600



State Representative

Bob Hasegawa

11th Legislative District



Dear Neighbor:

I’m honored to serve as your representative from the 11th Legislative District, which includes parts of south Seattle, Burien, Sea-Tac, Tukwila and the southern and eastern parts of Renton. I came to Olympia to make sure we have the best schools, best jobs and best health care. I hope you’ll read this mid-session update on our progress, then contact me with your comments and ideas. I look forward to your input.

Sincerely,

Bob Hasegawa
State Representative

425 John L. O’Brien Building
PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Toll-free Hotline: 800.562.6000

Hearing Impaired: 1-800-635-9993

hasegawa.bob@leg.wa.gov

Go to my website to subscribe to my e-newsletter.

<http://hdc.leg.wa.gov/members/hasegawa/>

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FIGHTING FOR WORKING FAMILIES

GOOD JOBS:

In our changing economy, working families are supported by both blue and white collar breadwinners. I came to the state government as your representative vowing to help working families get a fair deal. The first step is creating and keeping sustainable jobs in Washington State.

I've already co-sponsored and passed several good jobs bills: The first bill to pass the House this session creates good construction jobs and improves the quality of life in our communities. I helped pass the Public Works Trust Fund (House Bill 1049) through the Capital Budget Committee and then on the House floor. This bill provides funding to fix sewers, storm water systems, and water treatment plants. In our 11th District, the fund will invest over \$4.5 million in sewer and stormwater repairs, providing good family wage jobs in our district.

Apprenticeship is one of the most effective tools for workforce training for good family wage jobs. We need additional skilled workers, especially on public projects financed by tax dollars. Modern apprenticeship training programs train future workers from our community on these projects within our community. This helps build strong working families.



I also co-sponsored an anti-job discrimination bill which passed the House. But there's still a lot of work to do for good family wage jobs in our district. I'm working on a funding plan for the Renton city center project, transportation projects, and other improvements for the district.



QUALITY EDUCATION FOR EVERYONE

EDUCATION:

Everyone deserves the tools to succeed and follow their dreams. Education can unlock those goals, and open doors to a better life. Because of that, I sponsored, and am working to pass, a bill to make financial aid from the state available for more part-time students in college. Single parents and students who also work full time often can't take a full load of classes, so this bill (House Bill 1345) will allow financial aid for people taking as few as four credits.



Our kids need good, safe schools before they can learn. It's simply unfair to allow a minority of 40 percent to keep people in school districts from choosing to fund their own schools, because a levy vote requires over 60 percent approval. We elect our representatives and conduct other business by a simple majority of 50 percent. **Why not a simple majority for funds to improve our schools?** This is why I co-sponsored the simple majority bill which has now passed the House and is awaiting action in the Senate. Simple majority for school bond votes requires a constitutional amendment, so this bill will send the simple majority question to you, the voters, this fall.

I also support helping low-income students and kids in foster care through scholarship and mentoring opportunities, and through changes to the **Learning Assistance Program**.



AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE FOR WORKING FAMILIES

LOWER COST PRESCRIPTION DRUGS:

How can working families succeed if they are choosing between groceries or life-saving medicines? That's a choice nobody should have to face, but with health care and prescription drug costs going through the roof, too many people face that inhumane decision.

We can lower costs of prescription drugs by getting safe prescriptions from Canada.

I co-sponsored a package of four bills which have now been passed by the House to lower the cost and ensure the safety of drugs from Canada, start a purchasing pool to use our bulk buying power, and authorizing state agencies to purchase approved prescription drugs from Canadian pharmacies.



ACCESSIBLE HEALTH CARE FOR ALL:

Lowering the costs of prescription drugs is just a piece of the health care puzzle. To really make health coverage affordable and accessible for everyone, **we need to find new and innovative strategies to ensure everyone has health care coverage.** I prime sponsored a bill create a joint legislative health care task force (House Bill 2067) to come up with a solution to our health care crisis. I intend to work with Gov. Gregoire and other legislators to fix the entire health care system for everyone.

MENTAL HEALTH PARITY:

Full health care means taking care of the mind as well as the body. The House passed a bill I co-sponsored to end discrimination in insurance against people with mental health issues. House Bill 1154 will require insurance companies who offer mental health coverage to treat it equally with physical health coverage. Untreated mental health issues often lead to physical health problems, apparent criminal activity and even incarceration. **Adequate mental health coverage is smart, fair, and will save our health care system money in the long run.**